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DEATH OF CATHAL, THE RED-HANDED O'CONOR.

(As recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters, translated by Mr O'DONOVAN.)

A.D. 1224.—In the spring of this year, a heavy and an awful shower of strange rain fell on a part of Connaught, viz. Hy-Maine in Hy-Diarmada, and other places, which produced virulent infections and diseases amongst the cattle of these territories, as soon as they had eaten of the grass upon which the shower had fallen. The milk of these cattle, also, when partaken of by the inhabitants, caused various inward diseases among them. It was but natural that these ominous signs should appear this year in Connaught, for they were the foreboding heralds of a very great loss and calamity, which fell this year upon the Connacians, namely, the death of Cathal the Red-handed, son of Torlogh More O'Connor, and King of Connaught, who had been the chief scourge of the traitors and enemies of Ireland; who had contributed more than any other man to relieve the wants of the clergy, the poor, and the indigent, and into whose heart God had infused more goodness and greater virtues than adorned any other cotemporary Irish prince; for, from the time of his wife's death to the time of his own death, he had led a chaste and virtuous life. It was in his time, also, that tithes were first lawfully paid in Ireland. This honourable and upright king, this discreet, pious, just-judging warrior, died on the twenty-eighth day of summer, on Monday precisely, in the habit of a Grey Friar, in the monastery of Knockmoy; which monastery, together with its site and lands, he himself had previously granted to God and the monks; and was interred in that monastery with honour and respect.

EELS.

THEIR snake-like aspect and other reptile attributes (observes Professor Wilson, in a work recently published, entitled "The Rod and the Gun"), no doubt tend to form and perpetuate the prejudice which many otherwise humane-minded men cherish towards these insidious fishes. They move on land with great facility, and with a motion resembling that of serpents. They have even been seen to leave fresh-water lakes during the night in considerable numbers, apparently for the purpose of preying on slugs and snails among the dewy herbage. They abound in many continental rivers, and are caught in immense numbers in those which empty themselves into the Baltic, where they form a considerable article of trade. It is stated that 2000 have been caught at a sweep in Jutland, and 60,000 have been taken in the Garonne by one net in a single day. The habits of these fishes in relation to breeding, migration, &c. are still but obscurely known. "That eels migrate towards brackish water," observes Mr Jesse, in his *Gleanings in Natural History*, "in order to deposit their ova, I have but little doubt, for the following reasons: From the month of November until the end of January, provided the frost is not very serious, eels migrate towards the sea. The Thames fishermen are so aware of this fact, that they invariably set their pots or baskets with their mouths up stream during those months, while later in spring and summer they are set down stream. The best time, however, for taking eels, is during their passage towards the sea. The eel-traps, also, which are set in three different streams near Hampton Court (the contents of which at different times I have had opportunities of examining), have invariably been supplied with eels sufficiently large to be breeders, during the months I have mentioned. This migratory disposition is not shown by small eels; and it may therefore be assumed that they remain nearly stationary till they are old enough to have spawn. I have also ascertained that eels are taken in greater or lesser numbers during the months of November or December, all the way down the river to the brackish water. From thence the young eels migrate, as soon as they are sufficiently large and strong to encounter the several currents of the river, and make their way to the different contributory streams. I have also been able to trace the procession of young eels, or, as it is here called, the *eel-fair*, from the neighbourhood of Blackfriars' Bridge, as far up the river as Chestrey, although they probably make their way as far, or farther than Oxford. So strong, indeed, is their migratory disposition, that it is well known few things will prevent their progress, as even at the locks at Teddington and Hampton the young eels have been seen to ascend the large posts of the flood-gates, in order to make their way, when the gates have been shut longer than

usual. Those which die stick to the posts; others, which get a little higher, meet with the same fate, until at last a sufficient layer of them is formed to enable the rest to overcome the difficulty of the passage. A curious instance of the means which young eels will have recourse to, in order to perform their migrations, is annually proved in the neighbourhood of Bristol. Near that city there is a large pond, immediately adjoining which is a stream; on the bank between these two waters a large tree grows, the branches of which hang into the pond. By means of these branches the young eels ascend into the tree, and from thence let themselves drop into the stream below, thus migrating to far distant waters, where they increase in size and become useful and beneficial to man. A friend of mine, who was a casual witness of this circumstance, informed me that the tree appeared to be quite alive with these little animals. The rapid and unsteady motion of the boughs did not appear to impede their progress."

ANECDOTE OF SHERIDAN.

SHERIDAN and KELLY were one day in earnest conversation close to the gate of the path which was then open to the public, leading across the churchyard of St Paul's, Covent Garden, from King street to Henrietta street, when Mr Holloway, who was a creditor of Sheridan's to a considerable amount, came up to them on horseback, and accosted Sheridan in a tone of something more like anger than sorrow, and complained that he never could get admittance when he called, vowing vengeance against the infernal Swiss, Monsieur Francois, if he did not let him in the next time he went to Hertford street.

Holloway was really in a passion. Sheridan knew that he was vain of his judgment in horse-flesh, and without taking any notice of the violence of his manner, burst into an exclamation upon the beauty of the horse which he rode—he struck the right chord.

"Why," said Holloway, "I think I may say there never was a prettier creature than this. You were speaking to me, when I last saw you, about a horse for Mrs Sheridan; now, this would be a treasure for a lady."

"Does he canter well?" said Sheridan.

"Beautifully," replied Holloway.

"If that's the case, Holloway," said Sheridan, "I really should not mind stretching a point for him. Will you have the kindness to let me see his paces?"

"To be sure," said the lawyer; and putting himself into a graceful attitude, he threw his nag into a canter along the market.

The moment his back was turned, Sheridan wished Kelly good morning, and went off through the church-yard, where no horse could follow, into Bedford street, laughing immoderately, as indeed did several of the standers-by. The only person not entertained by this practical joke was Mr Holloway.—*Reminiscences of Michael Kelly.*

MAID-SERVANTS AND THEIR "FRIENDS."—Every master and mistress in the United Kingdom knows what a maid-servant's friend is. Sometimes he is a brother, sometimes a cousin (often a cousin), and sometimes a father, who really wears well, and carries his age amazingly! He comes down the area—in at the window—or through a door left ajar. Sometimes a maid-servant, like a hare, "has many friends." The master of the house, after washing his hands in the back kitchen, feels behind the door for a jack-towel, and lays hold of a "friend's" nose. "Friends" are shy: sometimes a footman breaks a friend's shins while plunging into the coal-cellar for a shovel of nubblys. We speak feelingly, our own abode having been once turned into a friends' meeting-house—a fact we became aware of through a smoky chimney; but a chimney will smoke when there is a journeyman baker up it.—*Kidd's Journal.*

Wisdom cannot be obtained without industry and labour. Can we hope to find gold upon the surface of the earth, when we dig almost to the centre of it to find lead and tin, and the baser metals!

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